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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this Department.]

A MISSIONARY NURSE

DEAR EDITOR: A letter was received a few days ago from Dr. Andrew Woods, who is associated with the medical work of the University of Pennsylvania, in Canton, China. He says:

Without a good nurse, hospital work will be impossible here. If we get a Chinaman who is sufficiently intelligent to do the work of a nurse, he is absolutely unwilling to serve the patients, considering the work as menial. Hence the doctor is forced to do all the work of nursing, in addition to his other duties.

I want you to keep your eyes open for a nurse who can train Chinese nurses; for if the Chinamen see an educated person, with this as a specialty, actually doing this kind of work, it will dawn on their minds that the work is not beneath their dignity. We doctors might secure the same result by giving up three or four years of practice and training a class of nurses; but it is impossible to do this and continue the work we are now doing. When I was home I met several nurses who spoke of being willing to go to China, and who seemed anxious to do it. I wonder if a desirable combination could be found, a nurse such as I have described who would be self-supporting. It would be a life-work well worth the time of some woman who had the means and whose taste inclined towards such things.

This nurse could go immediately to China, and, while doing a certain amount of work along her line, could also be learning the language in preparation for taking complete charge of the hospital which the University of Pennsylvania is about to build.

Any nurse desiring further information may write to Edward C. Wood, Houston Hall, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

MARTHA GIBSON BYERLY.

THE PREPARATION OF BEEF-JUICE

DEAR EDITOR: In your "Questions and Answers," under "Practical Suggestions," in the February JOURNAL, I notice that some one asks for a good method of preparing beef-juice, so I send the following simple plan which I learned from observing an ingenious junior nurse, who

grew tired of exhausting her muscular energies on a lemon-squeezer, and who lived in an institution where economy was a consideration and the expense of purchasing a good beef-juice expressor out of the question. Cheap ones, of course, were found to be of no use.

I found that she selected fresh rump steak, and prepared it by first wiping off with a clean damp cloth and then cutting it up into quite small cubes. These were placed in a glass jar, which was stood in another vessel of warm water (you can also add a little water to the beef if you so desire). After standing this way for about an hour or so, the beef was placed in a colander, and a saucer, which did not fit closely to the edges of the colander but rested immediately on the meat, was placed over it. On this saucer she put several ordinary bricks, wrapped up in paper or in a towel, and then stood the whole in a pan which would catch any of the juice that squeezed through, although we found that it usually collected on top and could be better poured off. My nurse used to prepare hers late in the evening and allow it to stand all night in a place that was *not* cold, and in the morning her beef-juice was all ready, and with very little expenditure of energy. Of course much depends upon the number and weight of the bricks or flatirons, or whatever pressure you may use, but by this method the juice practically *prepares itself while you sleep*, and it is quite handy to adopt in private nursing, when you cannot obtain all these nice machines that are part of the proper equipment of a well regulated hospital.

During the preparation all utensils and atmosphere should be neither too hot nor too cold, which interferes by coagulating; but under conditions favorable to hemorrhage.

BRITANNIA.

DEAR EDITOR: Apropos the question in THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING for February, "Can you tell me of a good method to extract juice from fresh beef?" I beg to offer the following information: A "beef-tea press" is made by Silver & Co., Brooklyn, New York, which is ideal for the purpose of extracting beef-juice. The press is small, being about four or five inches high and from three and a half to four in circumference. It is obtainable in the department stores in New York City at about twenty-five cents, or could be obtained from the makers, no doubt, at a very low price. I used one of these presses for the first time this winter, while nursing a typhoid case, and found that where I had been able to secure not more than four ounces of juice from two pounds of meat by using the lemon squeezer, seven ounces was easily obtainable with the beef-juice press. Before using, the meat should be

seared in a hot pan, after having been cut in pieces about two inches square.

I consider this press a valuable accessory to a nurse's outfit.

A. B. DAVIS.

THE QUESTION OF RATES AGAIN

DEAR EDITOR: In the JOURNAL for February there is an article among the "Letters to the Editor," "What Is a Fair Rate of Charge?" and among "Questions and Answers" the same query by I. H.

About laundry, I never charge for it at all. I charge twenty-five dollars a week, except in contagious cases, when, of course, prices vary and the laundry is cared for. It always seems to me that the necessity for a trained nurse in the house means also the necessity for extra work of all kinds, regardless of the nurse, and, as our mission is to be a help, I think the laundry done outside and no comments on it is the most helpful way, particularly as I always wear white and try to keep clean. There are occasions in a large household where the laundress is expected to do all the laundry work, including the nurses'. This, of course, is very much the easiest way.

In regard to the other question, about charges, if the first patient I go to is convalescent when another member of the family falls ill, it seems to me the right thing to take care of both, and if more attention is required than I can give I ask for another nurse. Extra pay will not make more hours in the day, nor more strength. One family I have taken care of in a variety of ailments. The mother was delivered, the baby splendid. When the baby was six weeks old the three other children had bronchitis, one after the other. By this time we had a nurse-maid for the new baby. The mother still needed care, as she was frail. I took care of all of them, with the help of the German nursery governess and the nurse-maid. They were not sick enough for another nurse to be called in. I never before heard that we were paid twenty-five dollars for one patient.

MARY R. HUMPHREY, R.N.

EXTRA PAY AND LAUNDRY

DEAR EDITOR: Once when I received a call for diphtheria it was stated that there would be two patients, and as the family was well to do and the work hard I asked thirty-five dollars a week: twenty-five dollars for the case, five dollars because it was contagious, and five dollars extra for the second patient. The family thought it fair, and willingly paid it.